United Nations CEDAW/C/SVK/Q/5-6

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
16 March 2015

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Sixty-second session
26 October-20 November 2015
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

List of issues and questions in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovakia

Legislative and institutional framework

1. Please provide more detailed information on the Anti-Discrimination Act (Act No. 365/2004) as amended, including its scope and the definition of discrimination provided therein. Please provide information on the evaluation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2009-2013 and the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010-2013, including on the results achieved. Please provide updated information on the new national strategy and the new national action plan, which were, according to the combined reports of the State party, scheduled for adoption in 2014 (CEDAW/C/SVK/5-6, paras. 19-20).[1]

Legal complaint mechanism

2. Please provide information on the availability in the State party of any complaint mechanisms with the mandate to receive complaints of discrimination against women. Please provide details on the number of cases of discrimination against women that have been reported and processed by such mechanisms, if they exist, and indicate whether women have simple and secure access to them and can benefit from legal aid.

National machinery for the advancement of women

3. It is stated that the institutional framework for human rights in the State party underwent major changes in the period under review (paras. 23-30 and 39-47).

* CEDAW/C/62/1.

[1] Unless otherwise indicated, paragraph numbers refer to the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Slovakia.

Please recycle

Please indicate the extent to which the changes have improved the national machinery for the advancement of women in terms of its visibility, power and human and financial resources at all levels, increased its effectiveness and enhanced its capacity to coordinate and monitor action at the national and local levels for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender equality.

4. Please indicate specific progress by the Statistical Office in the collection and publication of sex-disaggregated data. Please also indicate whether, when defining, collecting and disseminating statistical information, it takes into account the conceptual and methodological framework for human rights indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (see HR/PUB/12/5).

Temporary special measures

5. It is indicated that the State party adopted and expanded the concept of affirmative action during the reporting period (paras. 48-72). Please provide details thereon and indicate what temporary special measures in accordance with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on the subject were adopted. Please explain why measures for the protection of pregnant women are presented as temporary special measures. In the light of the Anti-Discrimination Act, please provide information on temporary special measures adopted regarding employment in the public and private sectors.

Gender stereotypes

6. The State party acknowledges that policies aimed at eliminating gender stereotypes have met with resistance in the conservative environment, which emphasizes the biological differences between men and women and the resulting "natural" division of labour and gender roles (para. 87). Another source indicates that some civil society groups at times refer to the concept of gender equality as *rodová ideológia* (gender ideology), which has a negative connotation. Please provide detailed information on the measures taken to address such resistance and to promote understanding of the concept of substantive equality between women and men.

Violence against women

7. Please provide information on specific results achieved under the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women 2009-2012 and updated information on the implementation of the iteration for 2014-2019. Please include details on progress made in adopting a specific law on domestic violence and violence against women, as well as in ratifying the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Please explain whether efforts to educate and raise the awareness of law enforcement officers and members of the judiciary regarding human rights include specific focus on violence against women.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

8. During the period under review, how many cases of trafficking in women and girls were investigated, how many persons were convicted and what sentences were imposed? What measures are taken to prevent and combat trafficking, including early identification and referral of victims? Does the State party engage in regional collaboration on border controls?

9. No information is provided on the prevalence of prostitution in the State party. Please supply information on the applicable legal framework and indicate whether any programmes are available to women wishing to leave prostitution.

Participation in political and public life

10. It is indicated that women have a low representation in the most important of the national and local legislative, executive and administrative bodies (paras. 157-160), that the average representation of women in the National Council has been in the range of 15 to 20 per cent (para. 158) and that no woman has to date led a self-governing region (para. 160). It is also noted that the Government is aware of the need to adopt legislative measures to overcome such challenges, but that no such changes are currently under consideration owing to lack of political will (para. 48). Please provide more detailed information on measures that the State party envisages taking to overcome such challenges and when they will be enforced.

Education

11. Please provide information on steps taken to ensure that girls and boys receive rights-based, evidence-based and age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education at school. Please indicate the content of the subject "Marriage and parenthood education" (para. 173). Please also provide information on measures taken to overcome stereotypes and stereotypical subject choices by boys and girls and on measures to balance the gender representation of teaching staff at all levels of education, including higher education.

Employment

12. Please provide updated information on the measures taken to eliminate horizontal and vertical segregation in the labour market and to reduce the wage gap in the public and private sectors. Please indicate specific measures in place to raise the awareness of men regarding the importance of sharing family responsibilities and describe measures targeting employers to encourage male employees to fully utilize flexible working arrangements and paternity leave.

Health

13. In its responses to the outcome report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review in 2014, the State party indicated its intention to adopt a comprehensive national programme on sexual and reproductive health and rights by October 2015 (A/HRC/26/12/Add.1, para. 21). Please provide information on steps taken towards the adoption of such a programme. Please explain how the proposed programme envisages incorporating international human rights and World Health Organization standards and indicate any obstacles faced in that regard.

14. In the light of the earlier recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (see CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/4) and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (see E/C.12/SVK/CO/2), in addition to those made at the second cycle of the universal periodic review (see A/HRC/26/12), please explain what measures have been taken to increase access to affordable modern contraceptives, in particular by women with low income and Roma women. Please indicate the extent to which public health insurance covers modern contraceptives.

15. It is indicated that conscientious objection on the part of health-care providers in cases of induced abortion, sterilization and assisted reproduction is legally protected in the State party (para. 219). Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that conscientious objection by health-care providers does not undermine access by women, in particular rural women, adolescent girls, women with disabilities and Roma women, to safe and legal abortion and other reproductive health services. Please also provide information on criteria under which abortion is legally permitted.

16. Reference is made to the recent judgements of the European Court of Human Rights on forced sterilization and the State party's efforts to implement them (paras. 223-224). Please indicate the monitoring mechanisms in place to prevent sterilization without free, full and informed consent in public and private health centres. Please indicate the number of complaints filed regarding sterilization without consent and, in cases in which violations were found, whether victims were granted effective remedies.

Economic and social benefits

17. While it recognizes the importance of social transfers in alleviating poverty (para. 269), the State party also acknowledges that existing social security benefits have not provided adequate protection for women living in poverty as a result of the recent economic crisis, especially single mothers, women with low income and older women (paras. 272-274). Please provide information on the measures taken to alleviate the disproportionate impact of the economic crisis on women.

18. Reference is made to demographic changes in the State party, including ageing and changing forms of family and the increase in the divorce rate and the rate of children born out of wedlock (paras. 4-9 and 267-268). Mention is also made of the fact that women are still expected to care for children and older family members as unremunerated work (paras. 88-89). Please describe measures in place and envisaged to align the provisions of social security benefits and services with the demographic changes.

Roma women

19. In line with the recommendations made by the Committee (see CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/4), the State party provided an analysis of the situation of Roma women using disaggregated data and information on measures taken to address it (paras. 64-71, 151-155, 183-184, 211-217 and 245). Please provide information on progress made in eliminating intersecting forms of discrimination faced by Roma women, in particular those living in segregated settlements. Please also indicate whether and how Roma women were involved in the development,

implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes relevant to them.

Marriage and family relations

20. No mention is made of the differences in the economic consequences for women and men of the dissolution of marriages or de facto unions. Please provide information on property that is being distributed upon such dissolution. Does the law recognize intangible property (e.g. pension funds, severance payments or insurance) as part of the property to be distributed? Does the law take into consideration the future earning capacity of parties in the distribution of property?